

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1501

May 3, 2019

The Honorable Robert E. Lighthizer
United States Trade Representative
Executive Office of the President
600 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20508

Dear Trade Representative Lighthizer,

I write with extreme concern about the ongoing trade wars and the effect they are having in my home state of Iowa. While I hope the Administration is successful in negotiating fair trade deals and ensuring continued access to foreign markets for our farmers and businesses, it is critical that you recognize the impact to our communities as the tariffs and associated retaliatory actions continue. Timeliness is of the utmost importance in resolving these issues.

Iowa is one of the nation's leading exporters of commodities, second only to the State of California. Iowa leads the country in exports of corn, soybeans, and pork and many industry sectors are directly affected by trade actions. Our economy is organized around the agriculture sector, with much of our manufacturing, processing, and shipping related to agriculture and, therefore, a significant amount of those industries support other businesses on our Main Streets.

Unfortunately, according to the Commerce Department, the trade wars have resulted in farm income falling by the most in three years with an annualized \$11.8 billion loss from the January to March period. The decline was so significant that Commerce cited this loss as weighing down the entire nation's personal income growth. Last year, Iowa State University estimated the losses from trade disruptions to Iowa's Gross State Product of \$1 billion to \$2 billion, with impacts to a wide range of sectors.

Along with impacts on the quantifiable sectors of our economy, I am concerned about the long-term impacts on our way of life, some of which will not be evident for years to come. I have heard from Iowans all around the state who are feeling the impacts. From dissuading the next generation from farming, to challenges with finances and financing, to mental health issues – the impacts are serious and far-reaching. We must ensure any new trade deals are worth the historic pain inflicted on my state and are satisfactorily resolved in a collaborative manner with our trading partners and Congress.

To guarantee the Administration understands what is happening in Iowa, and so that we may ensure progress is being made toward resolution of these issues, I ask that you provide Iowa's Congressional Delegation with a weekly update on the status of trade negotiations relating to the US-Mexico-Canada trade agreement (USMCA), or re-negotiated North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), and the ongoing discussions with China, Japan, the United Kingdom, and

ABBY FINKENAUER

1ST DISTRICT, IOWA

ASSISTANT DEMOCRATIC WHIP

124 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-2911

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

SMALL BUSINESS COMMITTEE
CHAIRWOMAN, SUBCOMMITTEE ON RURAL
DEVELOPMENT, AGRICULTURE, TRADE AND
ENTREPRENEURSHIP


Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-1501

the European Union. During those briefings, I want to share with you and your staff the stories I am hearing from Iowa about the impacts of the trade wars.

These issues are of the utmost importance to our state, and every day that goes by in the trade wars means more pain to the State of Iowa and our communities. I hope the Administration is successful in addressing some of the long-standing issues cited with our trading partners that have hurt our businesses and workers. In order to ensure progress is being made in that direction, and that you understand the urgency of successful resolution, I again request regular updates from your office on these issues.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. I look forward to your timely response and to working with you to ensure Iowa and our nation continue to have access to the global marketplace.

Sincerely,



Abby Finkenaue
Member of Congress